

Beyond Medicine: Reach Out and Read + Health and Education



CAROLINAS

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Optimum health and wellness can have a positive impact on the academic success of a child. Upstream factors, like adverse experiences early in a child's life may influence both education and health throughout the life course. The effects of ACEs on the developing brain and on behavior may explain why children have difficulties in school and greater illness.

Conversely, educational status has been identified as a predictor of health outcomes. The downstream benefits of education (greater socioeconomic resources and personal skills) can later predispose an individual to better health outcomes. Educational attainment can positively impact skills, such as personal control, problem solving, understand and advocate for health needs, follow or read instructions, and communicate effectively with healthcare providers.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PROVIDER?

Primary care providers support children and families starting in infancy through timely and appropriate medical care, and use of screening tools for early detection and treatment.

The medical home shares a common goal of supporting the link between healthy eating, physical activity, and improved academic achievement of children. Providers trained in the Reach Out and Read model can witness children's capabilities when they interact with a book which is a valuable tool to perform fast, efficient, and high-quality developmental surveillance to quickly assess gross and fine motor development as well as language by observing how the child interacts with the book.

Beyond primary care, providers promote efforts in the community to improve educational opportunities and create conditions in early childhood that put children on a path for better health. Providers speak to the health benefits of community investments that expand opportunities for preschool and primary/secondary education. Providers influence health and education by partnering with families to have meaningful effects on population health addressing upstream and downstream determinants.

HOW CAN REACH OUT AND READ HELP PROVIDERS?

As an essential component in pediatric primary care and an effective intervention, Reach Out and Read engages parents and prepares children to achieve their potential in school and beyond, by partnering with primary care providers to ensure that young children are healthy and ready to learn. Reach Out and Read is a well-researched, clinic-based approach to forging intentional skill-building, resilience, and positive behavior change in children and families. Shared reading can help develop strong parent-child bonds that last a lifetime, potentially mitigating ACEs. Research also shows that when primary care providers promote literacy readiness according to the Reach Out and Read model, there is a significant effect on parental behavior and attitudes toward reading aloud, as well as improvements in the language scores of young children who participate.

RESOURCE: <https://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/education/curriculum-tools/population-health/zimmerman.html>

To learn more about the value of Reach Out and Read in Pediatric Primary Care, please visit www.rorcarolinas.org.

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